WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A document publication system which records each document data that is inputted as an object of publication, publishes the document data by use of a public medium while recording publication time of the document data, and issues a certificate concerning the publication time of document data to a requester according to a publication time verification request by the requester designating the document data.

2. A document publication system for opening documents to the public, comprising:

a data reception means for receiving document data that is inputted as an object of publication;

a data publication means for publishing the document data received by the data reception means by use of a public medium;

a data registration control means for recording the document data received by the data reception means and recording publication time of the document data by the data publication means; and

a certificate issuing means for issuing a certificate concerning the publication time of document data to a requester according to a publication time verification request by the requester designating the document data.

3. A document publication system as claimed in claim 2, wherein the certificate issuing means converts the designated document data and data concerning the publication time of the designated document data to a format capable of preventing tampering of data and thereafter provides the converted data to the requester as the certificate.

4. A document publication system as claimed in claim 3, wherein the certificate issuing means adds a digital signature to the designated document data and the data concerning the publication time and provides

the data with the digital signature to the requester as the certificate.

5. A document publication system as claimed in claim 2, wherein:

the data publication means publishes the document data together with a document ID of the document data, and

the certificate issuing means converts the document ID of the designated document data and data concerning the publication time of the designated document data to a format capable of preventing tampering of data and thereafter provides the converted data to the requester as the certificate.

6. A document publication system as claimed in claim 5, wherein the certificate issuing means adds a digital signature to the document ID of the designated document data and the data concerning the publication time and provides the data with the digital signature to the requester as the certificate.

7. A document publication system as claimed in claim 2, further comprising a format conversion means for converting the format of the document data received by the data reception means to a predetermined format when the format of the document data is not the predetermined format.

8. A document publication system as claimed in claim 2, wherein the data publication means uses a public network as the public medium.

9. A document publication system as claimed in claim 8, wherein the data publication means uses the Internet as the public network.

10. A document publication system as claimed in claim 2, wherein

the data publication means uses mass media as the public medium.

11.   A document publication system as claimed in claim 10, wherein the data publication means uses broadcasting as the mass media.

12.   A document publication system as claimed in claim 10, wherein the data publication means uses newspaper and/or magazines as the mass media.

13.   A document publication system as claimed in claim 2, wherein the document data is document data concerning an idea invented or devised by a person.

14.   A document publication system as claimed in claim 2, wherein the data reception means receives the document data from a client via a network.

15.   A document publication system as claimed in claim 2, further comprising a publication report means for informing a requester who requested the document data publication about a document ID and publication time of the document data.

16.   A document publication method in which each document data that is inputted as an object of publication is recorded and published by use of a public medium while recording publication time of the document data, and a certificate concerning the publication time of document data is issued to a requester according to a publication time verification request by the requester designating the document data.

17.   A document publication method for opening documents to the

public, comprising the steps of:

a data reception step in which document data that is inputted as an object of publication is received;

5 a data publication step in which the document data received in the data reception step is published by use of a public medium;

a data registration control step in which the document data received in the data reception step is recorded and publication time of the document data by the data publication means is recorded; and

10 a certificate issuing step in which a certificate concerning the publication time of document data is issued to a requester according to a publication time verification request by the requester designating the document data.

18. A document publication method as claimed in claim 17, wherein in the certificate issuing step, the designated document data and data concerning the publication time of the designated document data are converted to a format capable of preventing tampering of data and 5 thereafter the converted data is provided to the requester as the certificate.

19. A document publication method as claimed in claim 18, wherein in the certificate issuing step, a digital signature is added to the designated document data and the data concerning the publication time, and the data with the digital signature is provided to the requester as the 5 certificate.

20. A document publication method as claimed in claim 17, wherein:

in the data publication step, the document data is published together with a document ID of the document data, and

5 in the certificate issuing step, the document ID of the designated

document data and data concerning the publication time of the designated document data are converted to a format capable of preventing tampering of data and thereafter the converted data is provided to the requester as the certificate.

21.   A document publication method as claimed in claim 20, wherein in the certificate issuing step, a digital signature is added to the document ID of the designated document data and the data concerning the publication time, and the data with the digital signature is provided to the requester as the certificate.

22.   A document publication method as claimed in claim 17, further comprising a format conversion step in which the format of the document data received in the data reception step is converted to a predetermined format when the format of the document data is not the predetermined format.

23.   A document publication method as claimed in claim 17, wherein a public network is used as the public medium in the data publication step.

24.   A document publication method as claimed in claim 23, wherein the Internet is used as the public network in the data publication step.

25.   A document publication method as claimed in claim 17, wherein mass media is used as the public medium in the data publication step.

26.   A document publication method as claimed in claim 25,

wherein broadcasting is used as the mass media in the data publication step.

27.　A document publication method as claimed in claim 25, wherein newspaper and/or magazines are used as the mass media in the data publication step.

28.　A document publication method as claimed in claim 17, wherein the document data is document data concerning an idea invented or devised by a person.

29.　A document publication method as claimed in claim 17, wherein in the data reception step, the document data is supplied from a client via a network.

30.　A document publication method as claimed in claim 17, further comprising a publication report step in which a requester who requested the publication of the document data is informed of a document ID and publication time of the document data.

31.　A computer-readable record medium storing a program for instructing a computer to execute a document publication process, in which each document data that is inputted as an object of publication is recorded and published by use of a public medium while recording publication time
5　of the document data, and a certificate concerning the publication time of document data is issued to a requester according to a publication time verification request by the requester designating the document data.

32.　A computer-readable record medium storing a program for instructing a computer to execute a document publication process for

opening documents to the public, wherein the document publication process comprises the steps of:

5   a data reception step in which document data that is inputted as an object of publication is received;

a data publication step in which the document data received in the data reception step is published by use of a public medium;

a data registration control step in which the document data received

10   in the data reception step is recorded and publication time of the document data by the data publication means is recorded; and

a certificate issuing step in which a certificate concerning the publication time of document data is issued to a requester according to a publication time verification request by the requester designating the

15   document data.

33.   A computer-readable record medium as claimed in claim 32, wherein in the certificate issuing step, the designated document data and data concerning the publication time of the designated document data are converted to a format capable of preventing tampering of data and

5   thereafter the converted data is provided to the requester as the certificate.

34.   A computer-readable record medium as claimed in claim 33, wherein in the certificate issuing step, a digital signature is added to the designated document data and the data concerning the publication time, and the data with the digital signature is provided to the requester as the

5   certificate.

35.   A computer-readable record medium as claimed in claim 32, wherein:

in the data publication step, the document data is published together with a document ID of the document data, and

5   in the certificate issuing step, the document ID of the designated document data and data concerning the publication time of the designated document data are converted to a format capable of preventing tampering of data and thereafter the converted data is provided to the requester as the certificate.

36. A computer-readable record medium as claimed in claim 35, wherein in the certificate issuing step, a digital signature is added to the document ID of the designated document data and the data concerning the publication time, and the data with the digital signature is provided to the

5   requester as the certificate.

37. A computer-readable record medium as claimed in claim 32, wherein the document publication process further comprises a format conversion step in which the format of the document data received in the data reception step is converted to a predetermined format when the

5   format of the document data is not the predetermined format.

38. A computer-readable record medium as claimed in claim 32, wherein a public network is used as the public medium in the data publication step.

39. A computer-readable record medium as claimed in claim 38, wherein the Internet is used as the public network in the data publication step.

40. A computer-readable record medium as claimed in claim 32, wherein mass media is used as the public medium in the data publication step.

41.   A computer-readable record medium as claimed in claim 40, wherein broadcasting is used as the mass media in the data publication step.

42.   A computer-readable record medium as claimed in claim 40, wherein newspaper and/or magazines are used as the mass media in the data publication step.

43.   A computer-readable record medium as claimed in claim 32, wherein the document data is document data concerning an idea invented or devised by a person.

44.   A computer-readable record medium as claimed in claim 32, wherein in the data reception step, the document data is supplied from a client via a network.

45.   A computer-readable record medium as claimed in claim 32, wherein the document publication process further comprises a publication report step in which a requester who requested the publication of the document data is informed of a document ID and publication time of the document data.